

CITY OF MUSKEGON
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA) /
BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (BRA)
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES

November 13, 2018

Chairperson M. Bottomley called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM and roll was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Riegler, Frank Peterson, Ron Pesch, Martha Bottomley, Paul Edbrooke, Don Kalisz, Mike Kleaveland, Mike Johnson, Heidi Sytsema, Jeanette Moore

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jay Wallace Jr, excused

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Franzak, Planning Director; Sarah Petersen, Treasurer; Beth Lewis, Finance Director; Ken Grant; Diane Renkenberger, Administrative Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT: Dave Alexander, Downtown Muskegon Now

MINUTES

The minutes of the October 30 meeting will be submitted for approval at the December 11 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Parking structure proposal – F. Peterson stated that M. Bottomley had spoken with J. Essex, and he had withdrawn his request to address the DDA regarding a downtown parking structure.

DDA Budget – M. Bottomley introduced LeighAnn Mikesell, the city's Director of Municipal Services. She stated that the DDA would be under Ms. Mikesell's division and she would be appointing support staff to the board. M. Bottomley stated that she wished to continue discussion on the direction of the DDA, and wanted to firm up the issues discussed by making and voting on motions as decisions were made. J. Riegler stated that he was satisfied with the direction of the DDA as discussed at the October 8 meeting, where the DDA would continue to partner with the city.

A motion that the DDA remain affiliated with the city, with the city providing staffing and administrative support, was made by J. Riegler, supported by M. Johnson and unanimously approved, with J. Riegler, F. Peterson, R. Pesch, P. Edbrooke, M. Kleaveland, M. Johnson, H. Sytsema, J. Moore, and M. Bottomley voting aye.

D. Kalisz arrived at 10:45 AM.

M. Bottomley stated that the board also needed to consider the types of projects it wanted to take on – large or small projects and activities – and if board members wished to form committees within the DDA to handle specific categories. She also stated that state law allowed up to 13 people on a DDA board and suggested that this board add 2 positions.

A motion to add 2 positions to the DDA for a total of 13 spots on the board was made by D. Kalisz, supported by M. Johnson and unanimously approved, with J. Riegler, F. Peterson, R. Pesch, P. Edbrooke,

M. Kleaveland, M. Johnson, H. Sytsema, J. Moore, D. Kalisz, and M. Bottomley voting aye. F. Peterson stated that he would present the request to the City Commission at their next meeting. Staff and board members discussed the makeup of the board; state law had certain requirements. Board members concurred that it would be beneficial to have a representative from the Chamber of Commerce and the Convention & Visitors Bureau on the board, especially with the convention center project coming up. F. Peterson stated that he would look into membership requirements, and that the City Commission had the final authority to appoint board members.

M. Bottomley asked which types of business the board would like to see the DDA handle going forward. The sample budget they were reviewing showed a variety of activities. J. Riegler stated that the BID currently covered some of the items listed in the budget. He preferred that the board be involved in a mixture of projects, both large and small. He did not want to tie up all of the DDA's funds in one or two large projects.

A motion that the DDA utilize its resources for a mixture of small and large projects or activities on an as-needed basis was made by J. Riegler and supported by F. Peterson, with discussion continuing on the motion. J. Riegler stated that he was in favor of incentivizing downtown retail businesses. M. Johnson suggested that the board designate funds to different areas by percentages. F. Peterson stated that that was similar to how the city's budget was done. D. Alexander advised the board that there were new laws governing DDAs that were coming out at the end of 2019 regarding transparency and reporting to the state treasury. DDAs would also be required to have a plan for spending their money so it was something the board should keep in mind when preparing a budget. R. Pesch stated that he would prefer to start with small projects, since this is the first time the board had money to spend. He stated that wayfinding signs were needed downtown; he also questioned whether the DDA should be responsible for so much of the arena's expenses, as shown on the budget worksheet. He also talked about making better use of some of the lots in the downtown area. F. Peterson stated that staff had done a lot of work already on items such as the downtown lots, although the DDA was not aware of it. He stated that part of the restructuring process was to make the DDA more aware of those things by holding regular monthly meetings. M. Bottomley agreed that the board needed to start with small steps. A vote was taken on the above motion that the DDA utilize its resources for a mixture of small and larger projects or activities on an as-needed basis, and was unanimously approved, with J. Riegler, F. Peterson, R. Pesch, P. Edbrooke, M. Kleaveland, M. Johnson, H. Sytsema, J. Moore, D. Kalisz, and M. Bottomley voting aye.

M. Kleaveland requested that the board review the line items on the budget worksheet that was provided. F. Peterson went through the items by line and answered questions. R. Pesch stated that he would like to see more activity at the arena. F. Peterson explained the different arena activities and the processes that had to be undertaken to hold events there. D. Kalisz asked what the board's role was in preparing the budget. F. Peterson stated that staff could assist the board with budget preparation. The board would then need to vote to approve it. The budget could also be amended if needed and the board would vote on that as well. D. Alexander stated that the board needed a policy stating how involved they wanted to be with budget preparation and details. M. Bottomley stated that they did not need to approve a budget right away and asked F. Peterson if there was anything on the worksheet that was time-sensitive. F. Peterson stated that the arena bathroom item was time-sensitive, as they needed to secure funding before they could relocate the bathrooms and open that space up along Western Avenue. H. Sytsema asked if the city had explored any other funding sources. F. Peterson stated that some funding could come from the city's public improvement fund. A motion to approve the \$250,000 expense for the relocation of the arena bathrooms was made by M. Kleaveland, supported by R. Pesch and unanimously approved, with J. Riegler, F. Peterson, R. Pesch, P. Edbrooke, M. Kleaveland, M. Johnson, H. Sytsema, J. Moore, D. Kalisz, and M. Bottomley voting aye. R. Pesch stated that he was not opposed to a one-time expenditure like this one, but still wanted further discussion regarding ongoing arena costs. D. Kalisz stated that he was in favor of the idea of allocating a percentage of the budget to small and larger items.

D. Alexander stated that he could provide board members with monthly updates on projects in the downtown area. He stated that the DDA meetings were required to be open meetings, meaning that they were open to the public and anyone could attend. Since some of the information he was privy to was confidential, he would first discuss it with the City Manager and report back to the board at a later date.

OLD BUSINESS

None

OTHER

None

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM.